

may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Oklahoma?

There was no objection.

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3031, the TSP Modernization Act of 2017, introduced by Ranking Member CUMMINGS from Maryland and Mr. MEADOWS from North Carolina earlier this year.

Federal employees enrolled in the Federal Employees Retirement System—known as FERS—enjoy the benefits of a three-part retirement structure. Those are a defined benefit pension plan, Social Security, and a 401(k)-style defined contribution plan known as the Thrift Savings Plan, or TSP.

With its low administrative costs and simple design, the TSP is an ideal retirement vehicle. Participants can choose from a variety of investment options, including index funds designed to track the Standard & Poor's 500 Index, the Dow Jones U.S. Completion Total Stock Market Index, or a low-risk government securities investment fund.

Participants can also passively manage their investments by putting money into a Lifecycle Fund, which allows the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board to purchase a combination of investments based on the year the employee is expected to retire.

Employees have a lot of options when investing their TSP funds, but when it comes to withdrawing their funds, the options are much more limited. This is because current statutory rules preclude employees from taking multiple post-service partial withdrawals. Employees cannot request a partial withdrawal or annuity purchase after making a periodic payment withdrawal election.

Statutory rules also require the purchase of an annuity if a participant fails to make an election by age 70½. The rules also restrict an employee's ability to make multiple in-service, age-based withdrawals.

The Board conducted a study in 2013, which found that separated participants moved \$9 billion from the TSP fund to other, costlier institutions. Nearly one out of every three of these participants cited a desire for additional withdrawal flexibility.

The study also found that, among currently employed participants, the same ratio of participants requested additional withdrawal flexibility for age-based withdrawals to address life events that arise. This bill would afford those additional flexibilities to address those concerns.

The bill provides more control to Federal employees over their own retirement by allowing for multiple post-separation partial withdrawals and in-service, age-based withdrawals. H.R.

3031 allows employees to change withdrawal elections as they grow older, and it allows the Board to avoid purchasing expensive annuities if a participant fails to make an election by age 70½.

This bill puts power and control in the hands of the employees that make our Federal Government run to make retirement decisions based on their personal situations.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 3031, the TSP Modernization Act of 2017.

I am proud to be a cosponsor of this legislation, which would help modernize the Federal Government's Thrift Savings Plan by aligning it with current practices for private sector 401(k)s.

I thank Ranking Member CUMMINGS and Chairman MEADOWS for their work on this important, bipartisan bill that would give TSP participants more flexibility in making withdrawals from their accounts.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 3031, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS), who is the ranking member of the full committee.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 3031, the TSP Modernization Act of 2017.

I thank the Government Operations Subcommittee chairman, Mr. MEADOWS, for working with me in a bipartisan manner on this commonsense, good government bill. I also thank the Oversight and Government Reform Committee chairman, Mr. GOWDY, for his support of this legislation.

Congressman MEADOWS and I introduced this legislation to make the Federal Government's Thrift Savings Plan more closely align with private sector best practices by allowing TSP participants more flexible withdrawal options.

In 2013, the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board found that employees who separated from Federal service transferred \$9 billion out of their TSP accounts to other financial institutions. TSP participants do this because private sector 401(k) plans provide more flexibility, and they wanted more options for withdrawing money in case they needed it.

A 2014 survey of TSP participants who withdrew funds showed that more than 50 percent reported that they wanted more flexibility to withdraw funds to address life events.

Current law limits participants to only one withdrawal from their TSP

accounts while in Federal service after reaching age 59½, and participants who make this type of age-based withdrawal cannot take another partial withdrawal once they separate from service. Similarly, participants who are separated from Federal service and who have not made a prior age-based withdrawal are restricted to making only one partial separation withdrawal.

H.R. 3031 would eliminate these restrictions and allow participants to make multiple age-based and post-separation withdrawals from TSP accounts. The bill also would allow participants to elect to combine partial withdrawals with an annuity. It also would eliminate automatic annuities as a default option in the absence of an election by participants.

By providing greater withdrawal flexibility, studies show that participants would be more likely to keep their assets in their TSP accounts. For example, a study issued by Vanguard in 2013 found that 50 percent more participants and assets remain in retirement plans when partial disbursements are allowed.

Providing more withdrawal options for Federal employees and retirees in the TSP may help their financial security since administrative fees for the TSP are much lower than fees charged by other financial institutions.

This legislation is supported by the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association, the American Federation of Government Employees, and the National Treasury Employees Union.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank Chairman GOWDY, Ranking Member CUMMINGS, and Chairman MEADOWS for their outstanding work in addressing the needs of Federal employees who give selfless public service to our Nation and should have this flexibility in their retirement planning.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the adoption of the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3031, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1600

FITARA ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2017

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3243) to amend title 40, United

States Code, to eliminate the sunset of certain provisions relating to information technology, to amend the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015 to extend the sunset relating to the Federal Data Center Consolidation Initiative, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3243

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “FITARA Enhancement Act of 2017”.

SEC. 2. ELIMINATION OF SUNSET RELATING TO TRANSPARENCY AND RISK MANAGEMENT OF MAJOR INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY INVESTMENTS.

Subsection (c) of section 11302 of title 40, United States Code, is amended by striking the first paragraph (5).

SEC. 3. ELIMINATION OF SUNSET RELATING TO INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PORTFOLIO, PROGRAM, AND RESOURCE REVIEWS.

Section 11319 of title 40, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating the second subsection (c) as subsection (d); and

(2) in subsection (d), as so redesignated, by striking paragraph (6).

SEC. 4. EXTENSION OF SUNSET RELATING TO FEDERAL DATA CENTER CONSOLIDATION INITIATIVE.

Subsection (e) of section 834 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015 (Public Law 113-291; 44 U.S.C. 3601 note) is amended by striking “2018” and inserting “2020”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) and the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Oklahoma?

There was no objection.

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I speak in support of H.R. 3243, the FITARA Enhancement Act of 2017, introduced by Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. ISSA, Ms. KELLY from Illinois, and Mr. MEADOWS earlier this year.

Today, the Federal Government spends more than \$90 billion on Federal IT, with approximately 75 percent of this money spent on archaic and legacy IT. This means we are paying more for less: less capability and less security. Meanwhile, major Federal IT investments often result in multimillion-dollar cost overruns and delays.

This state of affairs led the Government Accountability Office to designate Federal IT acquisition and management as high risk in 2015, meaning

this area is at high risk of waste, fraud, abuse, and mismanagement.

In 2014, Congress passed the Federal Information Technology Acquisition Reform Act, otherwise known as FITARA, to address some of these IT challenges.

Congress has maintained a watchful eye to ensure agencies fully implement the requirements of FITARA and use it as a vital oversight tool. In fact, the Oversight and Government Reform Committee has held five hearings on FITARA implementation.

The committee also created a FITARA scorecard to hold Federal agencies accountable for meeting FITARA requirements, some of which sunset in the near term.

This bill will help us facilitate Congress’ oversight efforts by extending key FITARA requirements to improve Federal IT.

For example, this bill extends requirements for agencies to publicly report schedule and cost information and to assess the risks of major IT investments. This bill also extends requirements for each agency to regularly assess its IT portfolio, look for opportunities to reduce duplication, and find savings.

Finally, the bill will help us continue to hold agencies accountable for consolidating and optimizing their data centers by extending these requirements—and GAO’s verification of these requirements—through 2020.

The GAO, which has been instrumental in assisting Congress oversee FITARA implementation, supports extending the FITARA sunset dates.

Mr. CONNOLLY from Virginia and Mr. ISSA from California have been the key leaders on the original FITARA law, and they have come together again to sponsor this bill, along with Representatives MEADOWS and KELLY.

The FITARA Enhancement Act is truly a bipartisan effort in making sure Federal agencies get their information technology management and acquisition houses in order.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY), the sponsor of the bill.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, DARRELL ISSA, the cosponsor of this bill and the cosponsor of the original FITARA; and my good friend from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) for his able management today.

The Federal Information Technology Acquisition Reform Act, or FITARA, was enacted 3 years ago. It represented the first major reform of the laws governing the procurement and management of Federal IT since the Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996.

FITARA is the framework for IT procurement and ensures the Federal Government is making smart and effective investments to modernize its IT, which is badly needed.

It has seven pillars:

First, it enhances CIO authorities, responsibilities, and accountability.

Second, it enhances transparency and improves risk management by requiring detailed information on investments to be published on the IT dashboard.

Third, we increased the frequency of portfolio reviews from annual to quarterly and included key decisionmakers from the agency and OMB to not only look for ways to increase efficiency, but to eliminate duplication.

Fourth, we built on the Federal data center consolidation effort to push agencies to realize big savings from this low-hanging fruit.

Fifth, people. Recognizing that Federal IT success is only as good as the people behind it, FITARA calls for expanding the training and use of IT professionals.

Sixth, FITARA seeks to maximize new tools like the Federal Strategic Sourcing Initiative, taking a page from the private sector to reduce duplicative spending on common purchases and off-the-shelf items.

Finally, FITARA advances a government software purchasing program to allow for purchasing licensing agreements that can be made available for use by all Federal agencies.

FITARA is a rubric for IT procurement that, hopefully, someday enables initiatives like the Modernizing Government Technology Act to build on our success of improving how the government acquires and modernizes IT.

When the stakeholders met on Federal IT from government agencies and industry, both Mr. ISSA and I constantly were reminded of why previous major IT reform efforts had fallen short of their potential: the lack of robust implementation plan and congressional oversight.

As Mr. RUSSELL indicated quite clearly, in that latter regard, we have robust oversight, and it will continue.

One of the things we had in FITARA were some sunset provisions, in the hope and expectation that, by having that, we would encourage cooperation and implementation. That cooperation and implementation is uneven throughout the Federal Government.

The GAO, or Government Accountability Office, recommended that we have this bill to extend those sunset provisions to buy a little bit more time to get with the program for those Federal agencies.

So that is what this bill does, but it builds on FITARA, which is the framework for IT procurement and modernization.

Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of the bill.

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA), an original cosponsor of this bill and also the former chairman of the Government and Oversight Reform Committee.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, no one has ever had a better partner on a piece of

legislation than I have had. The best way I can describe Mr. CONNOLLY is, like anyone else who came to a realization of something, he came to it with a great deal of zeal. This partnership, which began before the passage in 2014, to modernize a 1996 initiative that had fallen short, has been his passion and mine.

Normally, when you are chairman, people talk about what divides the committee. But nothing united us more than recognizing that over \$80 billion was being spent—and much of it needlessly. We don't achieve what we want to because there is never enough. Part of it is how we procure.

Prior to the passage of this legislation, it certainly was possible to have major pieces of procurement have somebody in charge who could not, in fact, change or drop the expenditure and who could not simply say: This isn't working. On top of that, often the people who did have the authority lacked the expertise. This has been true in all sorts of areas. There is much more work to be done.

Unlike Clinger-Cohen, which went on for 18 years before being updated, we were just 3 years past the implementation of this bill. With Congressman CONNOLLY's effort, we are coming back and making real changes—ones that can continue the process and speed it up.

Obviously, there are some areas like the IT dashboard and others that simply need to be continued to be renewed. This bill does it.

When I first talked to Mr. CONNOLLY, he was the best known for absolutely wanting to consolidate processing centers; consolidate these server farms that had proliferated. The number he had at the time turned out to be, although exorbitant, less than a quarter of the number we found. So there is more work to be done.

Procurement has to be done smart and is often consolidated. With the help of my colleague and Senator WARNER, the passage of the DATA Act allowed us to find, with greater detail, redundancy of expenditure.

So as we reauthorize FITARA, we also have the information to consolidate purchasing across vast numbers of agencies, eliminate redundancy, and, in fact, buy better. More needs to be done.

As Mr. CONNOLLY said so accurately, more money is spent on legacy systems than is spent on new systems that will actually save money and provide better services both to government workers and to the public.

So as we reauthorize the bill, I look forward to the oversight that the Oversight Committee has done and is able to do, and I look forward to continuing to work with my partner from Virginia, Mr. CONNOLLY.

Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of the bill.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this bill, H.R. 3243, the FITARA Enhancement Act.

FITARA is bipartisan legislation that has made significant strides in reforming government IT and making agencies more accountable. I thank Representative CONNOLLY for all his hard work on this bill, as well as my good friend who has just spoken, Mr. RUSSELL.

This bill would extend three provisions of FITARA that are set to expire. These provisions include the provision on Federal data center consolidation; transparency and risk management of major IT systems; and agencies' IT portfolio, program, and resource reviews, also known as PortfolioStat.

These provisions provide transparency and accountability for agencies and should be continued. GAO reports that if we allow these provisions to expire, we will miss out on major savings. IT spending makes up roughly \$100 billion of government spending each year. We cannot afford to allow this legislation that will save funds and help modernize IT assets to simply expire.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to strongly support this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman GOWDY, Mr. CONNOLLY from Virginia, and Mr. ISSA from California for this important and continued work that will not only improve IT and reduce duplication but will continue to save billions of taxpayer dollars.

Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3243.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess for a period of less than 15 minutes.

Accordingly (at 4 o'clock and 14 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1629

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HULTGREN) at 4 o'clock and 29 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings

will resume on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

H.R. 452, by the yeas and nays; and

H.R. 3243, by the yeas and nays.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. The second electronic vote will be conducted as a 5-minute vote.

SPECIALIST JEFFREY L. WHITE, JR. POST OFFICE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 452) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 324 West Saint Louis Street in Pacific, Missouri, as the "Specialist Jeffrey L. White, Jr. Post Office", on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Montana (Mr. GIANFORTE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 418, nays 0, not voting 15, as follows:

[Roll No. 562]

YEAS—418

| | | |
|-----------------|---------------|----------------|
| Abraham | Cartwright | Doyle, Michael |
| Adams | Castor (FL) | F. |
| Aderholt | Castro (TX) | Duffy |
| Aguilar | Chabot | Duncan (SC) |
| Allen | Cheney | Duncan (TN) |
| Amash | Chu, Judy | Dunn |
| Amodei | Ciicilline | Ellison |
| Arrington | Clark (MA) | Emmer |
| Babin | Clarke (NY) | Engel |
| Bacon | Clay | Eshoo |
| Banks (IN) | Cleaver | Espallat |
| Barr | Clyburn | Estes (KS) |
| Barragán | Coffman | Esty (CT) |
| Barton | Cohen | Evans |
| Bass | Cole | Farenthold |
| Beatty | Collins (GA) | Faso |
| Bera | Collins (NY) | Ferguson |
| Bergman | Comer | Fitzpatrick |
| Beyer | Comstock | Fleischmann |
| Biggs | Conaway | Fortenberry |
| Bilirakis | Connolly | Foster |
| Bishop (GA) | Conyers | Fox |
| Bishop (MI) | Cook | Frankel (FL) |
| Bishop (UT) | Cooper | Franks (AZ) |
| Black | Correa | Frelinghuysen |
| Blackburn | Costa | Fudge |
| Blum | Costello (PA) | Gabbard |
| Blumenauer | Courtney | Gaetz |
| Blunt Rochester | Cramer | Gallagher |
| Bonamici | Crawford | Gallego |
| Bost | Crist | Garamendi |
| Boyle, Brendan | Crowley | Garrett |
| F. | Cuellar | Gianforte |
| Brady (PA) | Culberson | Gibbs |
| Brady (TX) | Cummings | Gohmert |
| Brat | Davidson | Gomez |
| Brooks (AL) | Davis (CA) | Gonzalez (TX) |
| Brooks (IN) | Davis, Danny | Goodlatte |
| Brown (MD) | Davis, Rodney | Gosar |
| Brownley (CA) | DeFazio | Gottheimer |
| Buchanan | DeGette | Gowdy |
| Buck | Delaney | Graves (GA) |
| Bucshon | DeLauro | Graves (LA) |
| Budd | DelBene | Graves (MO) |
| Burgess | Demings | Green, Al |
| Bustos | Denham | Green, Gene |
| Butterfield | Dent | Griffith |
| Byrne | DeSantis | Grijalva |
| Calvert | DeSaulnier | Grothman |
| Capuano | DesJarlais | Guthrie |
| Carbajal | Deutch | Gutiérrez |
| Cárdenas | Diaz-Balart | Hanabusa |
| Carson (IN) | Dingell | Handel |
| Carter (GA) | Doggett | Harper |
| Carter (TX) | Donovan | Harris |